

Central
Bedfordshire
Council
Priory House
Monks Walk
Chicksands,
Shefford SG17 5TQ



28 January 2015

EXECUTIVE - Tuesday 10 February 2015

Further to the Agenda and papers for the above meeting, previously circulated, please find attached the following background paper:-

16. Award of the Contract for the Construction of Four Homes at Creasey Park Drive, Dunstable

Should you have any queries regarding the above please contact Sandra Hobbs, Committee Services Officer on Tel: 0300 300 5257.

Yours sincerely

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DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Creasey Park Drive, Dunstable

BM3 Architecture

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1
BM3 Architecture is instructed by Central Bedfordshire Council to submit this design and access statement to support a Full planning application.

1.1.2
The drawings which accompany this application describe the proposed layout of the site, house types to be utilised throughout the site, elevational treatments and materials, and detail access arrangements of the proposal. Diagrams identifying the site, access, and mix will also be incorporated within this document.

1.1.3
Relevant legislation to the development includes the Disability Discrimination Act 1995(and 2005) and compliance with Building Regulations Part M (approved document M). Furthermore, the scheme has been designed to comply with Design and Quality Standards, which includes Lifetime Homes.

1.1.4
The scheme will be developed to achieve level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes.

1.2
The application submission focuses on the provision of 4 new dwellings proposed for affordable rent and shared ownership.

1.2.1
The following documents are submitted in support of the application by BM3 Architecture:

- Site location plan
- Red line site layout plan
- Block Layout Plan
- Dwelling plans and elevations
- Coloured street scene
- 3D Visuals

1.3
Pre-application discussions were held with Central Bedfordshire Council regarding the principles of the development and the various design options. This scheme was developed from an option chosen by the client as the most suitable for the site.



Figure 01 - Birds-eye view of site



Figure 02 - Existing Site Photos

2 THE SITE

2.1

The site at Creasey Park is a former garage site which has been vacant for 20 years. The site is owned by Central Bedfordshire Council. The infill site is 0.09 hectares in area and fronts onto Creasey Park Drive in Dunstable. It is located within an existing urban residential block. To the north east of the site, there are a number of industrial buildings on Lawrence Way, with two storey residential dwellings surrounding the remainder of the site.

2.1.2

An existing access into the site exists off Creasey Park Drive.

3 USE

3.1

The owners of the site, Central Bedfordshire Council, wish to develop the site and propose to build four residential dwellings comprising two 2bed 3person flats, one 2bed 3person bungalow, one 2bed 3person wheelchair accessible bungalow together with associated car parking and landscaping. The dwellings are proposed as affordable rent.

The dwellings have been designed in accordance with:

- Secured by Design
- Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4
- Lifetime Homes
- Housing Quality Indicators

3.12

The development is designed specifically for this site and promotes contemporary, sustainable living creating an attractive place in which to live.

Figure 03 - Site & Context



4 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

4.1

BM3 Architecture Ltd was appointed by EC Harris to assist in a viability study for Central Bedfordshire Council to identify suitable garage sites/ former garage sites in which to take forward for potential developments of affordable housing.

4.1.2

A large number of sites were initially appraised through a desktop study in which analysis was carried out of various elements/ constraints such as garage ownership, underground services, site access, proximity of neighbouring buildings etc.

4.1.3

This sifting process narrowed down the long list of sites into a pool of sites suitable for development. A more detailed report was then carried out on the pool of development sites which focused on de-risking the sites through producing a schedule to be used for comparison which comprised the following:

- Site details & condition – Cleared, derelict, in-use etc
- Access to site – Pedestrian & vehicular, existing footpath & road widths to establish whether existing highway design could support additional dwellings
- Existing site boundaries – types & condition
- Adjacent buildings – proximity, distances, over-looking issues
- Access restrictions on site boundaries – rights of access to rear gardens etc
- Site conditions regarding demolition, asbestos, existing levels/ topography, noise pollution
- Ecological issues – existing trees, drainage, Japanese knot weed
- Existing services – BT cable ducts, drainage runs, substations/ overhead cables, street lighting
- Surveys anticipated
- Summary of recommendations
- Site photographs & redline boundary OS plan

4.1.4

By using this process, it was relatively easy to establish and narrow down the list to a number of preferred sites. BM3 then carried out design feasibilities on each of the sites to establish site access, total numbers, unit types and general urban design intent. By using the completed analysis, the client was able to commit to 3 No. sites to take forward for costing and which could also be used to begin a dialogue with the planning department.

4.1.5

A preferred site was then determined by CBC to take forward for further design development. A number of feasibilities were then carried out for the Creasey Park Drive site which investigated varying options which differed in layout, amount and mix of dwellings. The following 3d visuals show the different options.

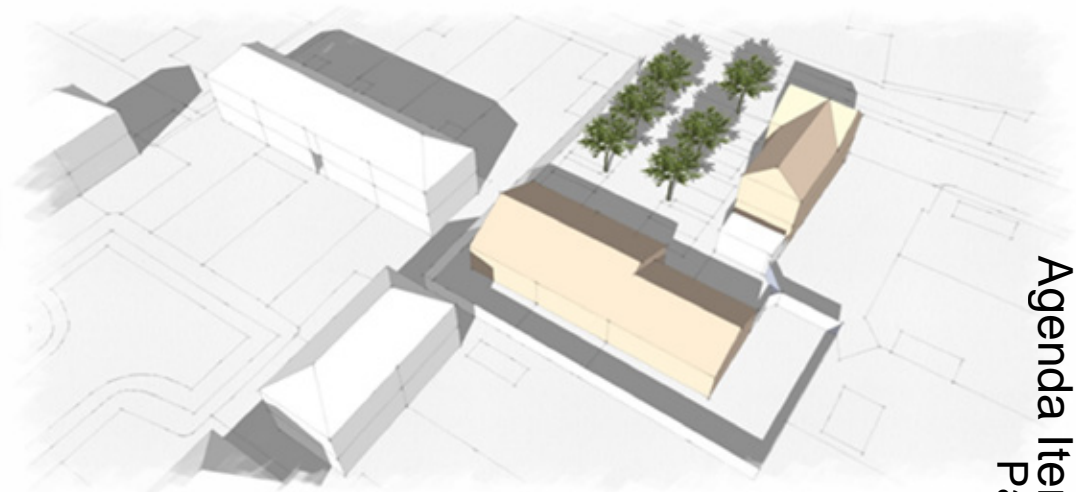


Figure 04 - Option 1 – Comprising two 2bed flats and three 2 bed bungalows

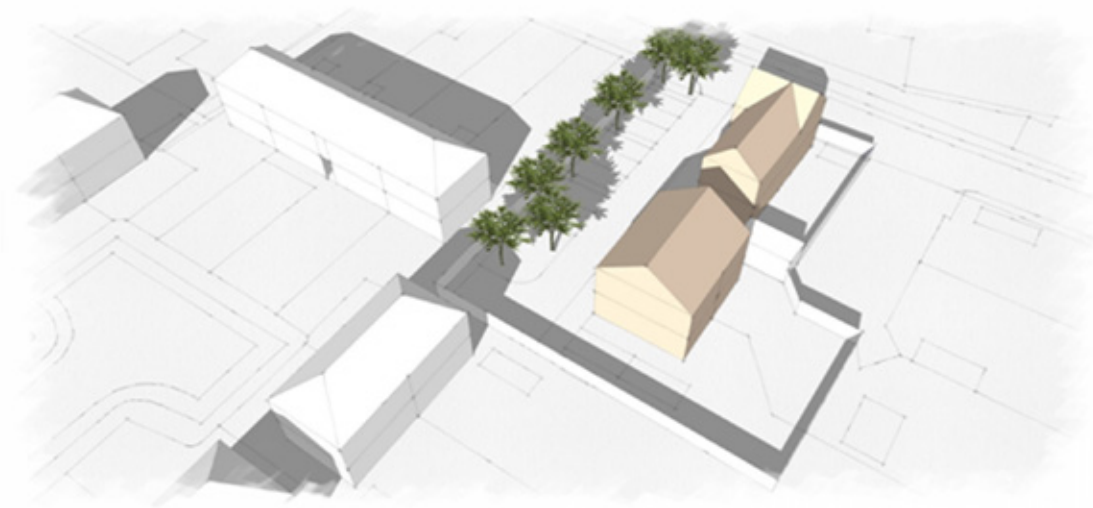


Figure 05 - Option 2 – Comprising two 2bed flats and two 2bed houses

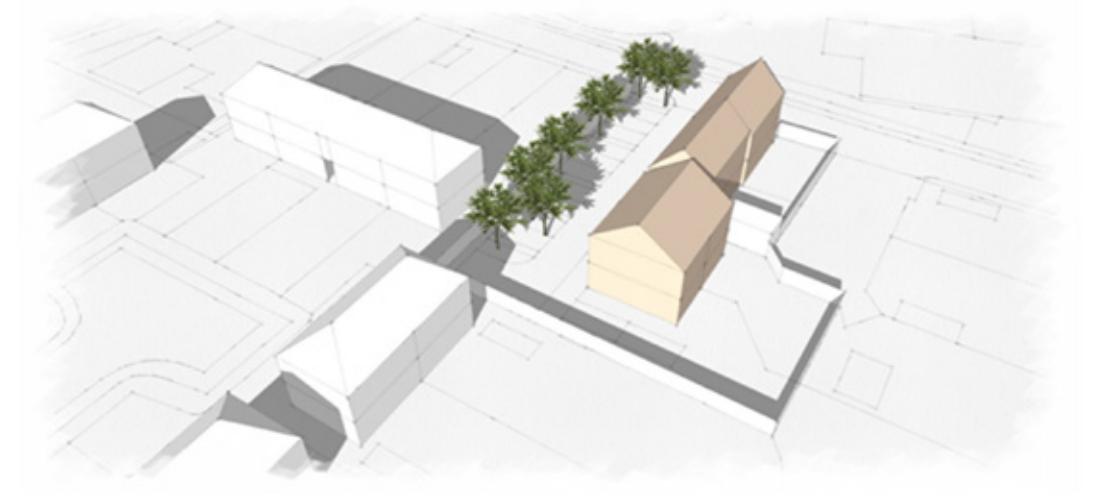


Figure 06 - Option 3 – Comprising two 2bed houses and two 3bed houses

4.1.6

The 3 options were considered by the client, however due to the various site constraints, especially the neighbouring dwellings and also the mix of dwellings, it was felt that a fourth layout was required that was include two 2 bed flats and two 2 bed bungalows, one of which to be designed as a wheel chair accessible dwelling.



Figure 07 - Option 4 - Comprising two 2bed flats and two 2bed bungalows (inc one wheel chair accessible bungalow)

4.1.7

Option 4 was considered as the most appropriate option as it provided the client with a viable solution in terms of mix and the variety of dwelling types, but also in regard to the layout as it not only addressed the entrance into the site by positively responding to the corner location but also respected the neighbouring dwellings by introducing 2 single storey bungalows as not to impede on the private amenity of the existing properties.

4.1.8

To further de-risk the scheme proposals to ensure that the development was in line with planning guidance including highways, BM3 submitted a pre-planning application in order to seek the views and guidance of the planning authority. The comments received have been incorporated into the latest design proposals.

Community Involvement

4.2

Since the pre application, further work on the appearance of the dwellings has been carried out by BM3. These options were put out to consultation by CBC prior to this formal planning submission being made. The three options provided different solutions in terms of building form, roof geometry and materials. Following the consultation exercise, option 3 was confirmed as the preferred option to take forward to planning. The options are shown to the right:



Figure 08 - Option 1 – A contemporary approach comprising monopitch roofs, metal cladding brick and render



Figure 09 - Option 2 – A contemporary approach comprising monopitch roofs and cladding panels

4.8

Throughout the process, it was imperative to ensure that CBC, EC Harris and BM3 worked collaboratively due to the nature of the project as the knowledge base was split between all parties. CBC held all the relevant information on ownership, rights of access and potential buy-back options which meant the sifting process of eliminating non viable schemes was a relatively simple one.

EC Harris's vast knowledge of affordable housing and its implementation, cost analysis and project management enabled the project to progress to a point where the long list of potential sites became a condensed number of preferred sites with Creasey Park Drive being the priority site. Grouped with the housing and urban design expertise of BM3 resulted in a fully cohesive approach to fulfilling the aims and aspirations of the brief.



Figure 10 - Option 3 – A more traditional approach in terms of morphology with duo pitched roof and gables however designed with a contemporary aesthetic through the use of brick, render and cladding

5 AMOUNT

5.1

The scheme comprises of a total of two 2 bedroom dwellings for affordable rent and two 2 bedroom dwellings for shared ownership. Please refer to figure below for detailed breakdown of accommodation and associated floor areas. All of the proposed floor areas fall within the requirements of CBC design Guidelines Sept 14.

5.1.1

A mix of house types is provided including 2bed 3 person apartments and bungalows. The layouts have been designed to comply with Design and Quality Standards which includes Lifetime Homes. The scheme will be Secured by Design compliant, including both sections 1 and 2.

5.2

The application site is approximately 0.09 hectares in area. The proposed density of the site works out at 44 dwellings per hectare (DPH) which is classed as medium density. Although slightly higher than the surrounding area which is approximatley 30 dwellings per hectare, the location is accessible and close to public transport routes, shops and facilities. Considering the site is suburban infill we would consider the level of development is appropriate for the location.

Schedule of Accommodation			
TYPE	BED	SIZE m²	QUANTITY
A	2B 3P Flat	66.1	1
B	2B 3P Flat (walkup)	77.2	1
H	2B 3P Bungalow	61.9	1
Q	2B 3P Bungalow (wheel chair)	69.3	1
TOTAL		274.5	4

Figure 11 - Schedule of Accommodation

5.2.2

The layout provides 2 car parking spaces for each dwelling and 2 visitor spaces (a total of 10 spaces) which complies with local planning policy.

5.2.3

Bedroom sizes fall within the requirements of CBC design Guidelines Sept 14 with the exception of the single bedrooms in both the bungalow types. 8sqM is required and 7.2sqM is achieved. The reason for this is that the bungalows were designed specific to the site. The limitation when designing types Q & H was the pinch point between the existing retained garage and the south west boundary. The bedrooms in question however are extremely functional as single bedrooms.

5.2.3

Storage requirements fall within the requirements of CBC design Guidelines Sept 14 for all four dwellings.



Figure 12 - Diagram illustrating the mix of dwellings



6 LAYOUT

6.1

The design principles follow good urban design practice that includes creating places that are safe, distinctive with good connections.

6.2

The design concept includes the provision of high quality, contemporary and sustainable housing that forms a strong frontage onto the new access drive. Entrance doors are positioned to face the public realm to create active fronts, together with windows and juliet balconies that also provide high levels of passive surveillance.

6.3

The proposal comprises 1 and 2 storey dwellings throughout the site. The 2 storey apartment block provides the main emphasis from the public realm as it was considered that this scale suits the location and fits in well with the morphology of the surrounding context as a whole.

6.4

The layout has been planned to be sympathetic with the surrounding dwellings, especially plot 32 & 34 Aldbanks. The proposed dwellings nearest 32 and 34 Aldbanks have been designed as one storey bungalows as not to affect or compromise the amenity space of 32 & 34 Aldbanks. A two storey apartment block is located at the entrance into the site and positively addresses Creasey Park Drive. The block has been designed as a corner turner building and so also provides a frontage onto the new access road to the proposed dwellings. Car parking is provided off the access road opposite the new dwellings; with the exception of the wheelchair accessible bungalow (Type Q). It benefits from a parking space which is located to the side of the dwelling and is covered by a carport. Please refer to figure 13 on page 11 together with the visual of the proposed development in figure 14.



Figure 14 - 3D Visual



Figure 14a - Access & Tenure Plan

6.5

The layout promotes a public front / private back approach, which improves security and surveillance of the public realm in line with Secured by Design principles.

6.6

A group of three bins will be provided to each dwelling comprising; general waste, recycling and garden waste, these will be located in the rear gardens of the bungalows and within the bin store of the walk up apartments. Each dwelling benefits from having a side access which will allow residents to move the bins onto the footpath on collection days.

7 LANDSCAPE

7.1

The site is fairly small so the landscaping strategy is relatively simple and focuses on enhancing and softening the overall appearance of the site. Low level planting to the fronts of dwellings will provide a welcoming entrance. Trees and further low level planting is provided with several new trees proposed across the site to soften the boundaries and enhance the character of the place. Please refer to the indicative landscaping proposal.

7.2

A minimum 1800mm high close board fence will be provided for the division of all rear gardens together with site boundaries to dwellings. The fencing will comply with the Secured by Design requirements. All rear gardens are to be accessed by a close boarded style timber gate with a galvanised steel barrel bolt. A brick wall has been proposed to the boundary that fronts onto Creasey Park Drive. Gardens will incorporate a paved patio area and provision for refuse and recycling bins and clothes drying. Please refer to the drawing 52499_D01 for details.

Landscape Plan to be added

Figure 15 - Indicative Landscape Plan



Figure 15a - Visual

8 APPEARANCE AND MATERIALS

8.1

The main concept for the appearance of the proposed dwellings is to provide a scheme that has a distinctive character with its own identity, however the new homes have also been designed to respect the surrounding context in terms of scale and materials.

8.2

A buff style brick is proposed as the main facing material, which is complemented by areas of off-white render. Grey shiplap cement fibre cladding is utilised to break up the mass of the elevations, whilst also providing points of emphasis, such as the corner facing Creasey Park Drive together with the central entrance to the apartments.

8.3

The fenestration to the dwellings has a simple rationale with generous sized windows allowing for good day lighting to the rooms behind. A generous brick return to the windows will give a bolder shadow line adding to the interest of the elevations.

8.4

Duo pitch roofs have been designed with fibre cement slate style tiles providing a modern but simple aesthetic. Gables to the apartment block help to address the entrance and mid point of the site.

8.5

The elevation facing out on to Creasey Park Drive includes a projecting window bay clad in grey shiplap fibre cement intended to positively address the public realm.



Figure 16 - Street Scenes

8.6

Main entrance doors will have a solid softwood frame and be gloss painted or stained. A minimum clear opening width of 800mm at 90° will be provided. The entrance doors to the bungalows have a glazed side light. All windows will be uPVC windows in white, with appropriate coloured foil face to achieve a standard grey RAL colour finish externally. All doors and windows will comply with Secured by Design and Building Regulations.

8.7

Glazed canopies are used above the front doors to the apartments. For the bungalows the eaves extend out to provide suitable shelter.

8.8

Black uPVC rainwater goods will be used throughout. An approved, plumbed in water butt will be provided in each garden. Each butt will be connected to a suitably located rainwater downpipe with an automatic overflow into the conventional rainwater drainage system.



Figure 17 - 3D Visual illustrating material use



Figure 18 - Sketch Elevations for H Type

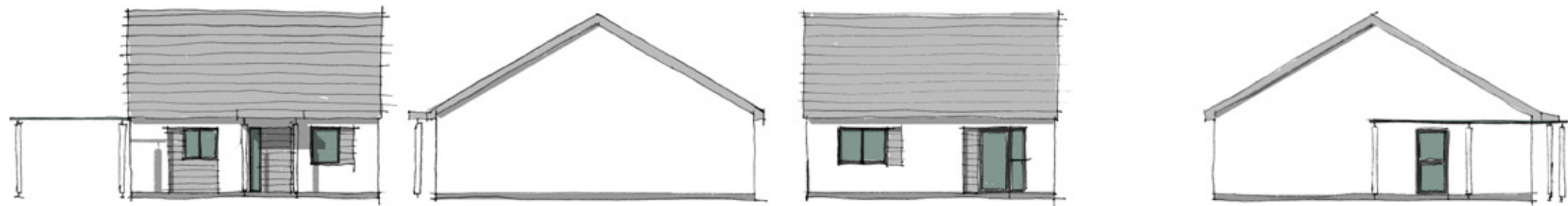


Figure 19 - Sketch Elevations for Q Type



Figure 20 - Sketch Elevations for A & B Type

9 ACCESS

9.1

Vehicular Access is directly off Creasey Park Drive.

9.1.1

A turning head is provided at the entrance into the site off Creasey Park Drive allowing refuse and emergency vehicles to adequately turn within the entrance and reverse into the site. A turning head is provided internally off the access drive to allowing residents and visitors easy maneuverability within the site.

9.1.2

Improvement works and road widening will be implemented to Creasey Park Drive in order that the highway complies with the highway department's requirements.

9.1.3

The closest bus stops are on Brewers Hill Road.

9.2

Inclusive Access

The development aims to adopt the following principles of inclusive design.

- A development that can be used safely and easily by as many people as possible without separate provision. This includes people with differing disabilities, elderly people and parents and guardians of young children;
- Adopts high quality design and use of appropriate materials;
- Achieves safe, comfortable and healthy environments;
- Provides for ease of use and way finding and provides information in an accessible format;
- Incorporates signage on the approach, outside and inside the development that is legible and meets the diverse needs of all the community.

10 HIGHWAYS

Creasey Park Drive

10.1

Access will continue to be provided off Creasey Park Drive via a vehicle crossover which replaces an existing arrangement. It is understood that Creasey Park Drive is a private street. Creasey Park Drive currently provides access to the following:

- Creasey Park Community Football Centre;
- Unused commercial units;
- Five existing residential properties; and
- National Cycle Route 6 between Leighton Buzzard through Dunstable to Luton.

10.2

It is apparent that the proposed scheme will have a negligible impact upon the existing function and condition of Creasey Park Drive. Indeed the net difference between the former use as residential car garages and the proposed residential would probably result in no change.

10.3

While CBC have asked for some improvements to be proposed to Creasey Park Drive, these need to be commensurate with the proposed development and accommodate the existing function of Creasey Park Drive.

10.4

After review, we do not believe that increasing the footway width by narrowing the carriageway is going to offer any real improvement overall, and could even result in some detriment to cyclists by forcing drivers and cyclists to share a narrower carriageway space. A reconditioning scheme between Brewers Hill Road and the development access would increase the design life and appearance of this short length of road. However this would be very costly and disproportionate to the scheme proposal (4 residential units).

10.5

We have also looked at the operation of the junction of Creasey Park Drive with Brewers Hill Road and do not believe that any overall improvement to the junction can be offered that is proportional to the scheme proposal. However we would suggest that the junction is difficult for cyclists to navigate especially as this is a national cycling route.

10.6

In consideration of the above issues, we would suggest that some repairs are made to the existing carriageway in Creasey Park Drive and a new sign is erected to help improve the legibility of the junction for cyclists. Existing vegetation should also be cut back to improve illumination of the carriageway by existing street lighting. We suggest that an existing damaged street lighting column opposite the proposed access is replaced with a similar type and height of column.

10.7

These measures would collectively help to increase the life expectancy and safety of Creasey Park Drive, while maintaining this existing operational standard.

10.8

These offsite highway improvements do not require a Road Safety Audit as they do not propose any changes to the existing highway alignment. However we have also taken the views and opinions from our own internal road safety auditors concerning the above issues.